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GOVERNOR LAUNCHES NEW WEB FORUM FOR SAVINGS IDEAS
Arizona Openness and Savings Strategies Will Contain Ideas, Elicit Suggestions

PHOENIX – Governor Janet Napolitano today launched a new Web portal – *Arizona Openness and Savings Strategies*, or AZ-OSS – that will serve as a forum for state agencies to exchange strategies that have allowed them to save money, as well as a location for state employees and members of the public to participate in the budget management process and submit their savings ideas.

“We’re going to open up the budget management process among state agencies, as well as between state government and the public,” Governor Napolitano said. “If a state agency has found a great efficiency strategy that has freed up funds in their agency budgets, the *Arizona Openness and Savings Strategies* Web site will let them share it with other agencies faster than ever. Arizonans can also look here to see the ideas that are helping to save taxpayer money, and to submit their ideas.”

The AZ-OSS website contains several main components: a place for agencies to submit and share savings practices that have worked for them, providing easy-to-understand explanations of the savings strategy, as well as a point of contact who can work with other agencies at implementing it; a place for Arizonans to get news on the budget management process; tips for how state employees can save in their everyday activities; and a place for state employees and members of the public to submit their savings ideas.

“If there’s an idea that’s worked for you in your home or business, we want to hear from you,” Governor Napolitano said. “Visit the new AZ-OSS Web site and send in your idea. All Arizonans have a stake in how we manage through our budget difficulties. Our efficiency efforts in the past five years have saved taxpayers more than \$1 billion, but there are always new ideas and new strategies to save.”

The AZ-OSS Web site is located at www.az.gov/oss.

The launch of *Arizona Openness and Savings Strategies* is the latest step in Governor Napolitano’s management of the budget deficit in Arizona – a phenomenon which is being experienced currently by 30 other states due to the state of the national economy. Her previous steps include:

- Announcing last week that the state would freeze new or renewed contracts of more than \$50,000 until they could receive further review to ensure they were giving the state best value.
- Also announcing last week that, as part of the Governor's top priority to preserve funding for education, she would work with school districts to make sure that as much school district funding as possible is spent in the classroom.
- Developing budget management plans to address any projected shortfall, which was accomplished last month.
- Putting in place the statewide hiring freeze in February, which has so far trimmed the state payroll by 1,000 positions, saving the state government millions without any layoffs.
- Billing the federal government for the amount owed – but unpaid – to Arizona under the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program. By law, the federal government is required to reimburse states for the cost of incarcerating illegal aliens. If the federal government paid its \$501 million bill, that would likely cover the state's budget deficit.

For more information on the Office of the Governor, please visit www.azgovernor.gov.